

Watery issue for City Hall to resolve

KUALA LUMPUR suffered its worst flooding when an afternoon down-pour on Dec 13 left hundreds of people stuck in a bumper-to-bumper traffic in Jalan Tun Razak, Jalan Semarak, and Kampung Baru.

The situation has left many people wondering, After millions spent on flood-mitigation projects, should this have happened?

Naturally it prompted calls for the Government to allocate immediate funds to upgrade Sg Bunus — the source of the flood havoc.

And it was no surprise to hear of an RM85mil allocation for flood-mitigation work, including RM20mil for the Federal Territory Drainage and Irrigation Department, to divert water from Sg Bunus to Lake Titiwangsa.

After more than half a century now, it seems every administration has come up with some plan or another to alleviate floods in the Kuala Lumpur yet the problem still persists.

When the city experienced its severe floods in 2007, it propelled the opening of the RM1.9bil Storm



Nowhere to go: Motorists stuck in a massive traffic jam because of floods in Jalan Tun Razak.

Water Management and Road Tunnel project (SMART) months ahead of schedule.

Before that, the federal capital experienced massive floods twice in 2001 and once in June 2003. It was then that our city fathers realised that the rivers flowing through the city were no longer able to cope the rising volume of water and the massive development did not permit for river improvement work because of space constraint.

A SMART spokesman had said that had it not been for the SMART Tunnel the city would have experienced much worse flooding recently.

Flood mitigation projects undertaken by the government, City Hall and the Federal Territory Drainage and Irrigation Department had been implemented over the past 10 years.

In fact in 2007 alone seven projects were carried out in various flood-prone areas in the city.

Some of these “long-term” measures include, building retention ponds, upgrading drains and diverting water from one river to another.

While these projects have to some extent mitigated the flooding, nothing has ever been able to solve the problem.

So will announcing a fresh tender for another flood-mitigation project to divert the flow from Sungai Bunus to Sungai Gombak through Taman Tasik Titiwangsa the solution?

Maybe it could be as KL mayor Tan Sri Ahmad Fuad Ismail said there would always be floods if the rainfall was very heavy.

So perhaps KL residents can do their part by mitigating the situation by not choking the drains and rivers with garbage.

It was reported that since last week's floods, DBKL and DID have been working hard to clear the debris from the drains and rivers.

It is everyone's responsibility to take care of the city and people must change this “*tidak apa*” attitude if Kuala Lumpur is ever to develop as a world-class city.